

JUNE 9, 1966

TO: COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - 1966 BOND ISSUE

FROM: CHARLES L. FARRIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ST. LOUIS HOUSING AND LAND CLEARANCE AUTHORITIES

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A recent feature story in the Wall Street Journal reported very favorably on the progress of the total St. Louis renewal effort. However, the writer also noted that concern was being expressed locally over where we go from here, now that the Arch, the Stadium, Mill Creek Valley, Kosciusko, Mansion House and other major undertakings are complete or very nearly so.

This has long been a concern of the Land Clearance Authority, the City Plan Commission, and others who are daily faced with the great time demands in the planning and execution of major renewal programs.

We now face the prospect of whether we maintain the renewal momentum, or allow another time gap of the kind that has been so costly to St. Louis in the past.

An important aspect of the continuing renewal effort -- an aspect established officially nearly ten years ago -- is embodied in what is called the Murphy Area.

This Area, bounded by Delmar, Jefferson, Palm, and the Mark Twain Expressway (see attached map -- Exhibit A), is critically important in the City's present and future structure, with wide-reaching physical, social and economic effects -- a collective impact that has been largely negative for nearly thirty years, both where the residents of the Area and the larger community are concerned.

In its physical location, Murphy's importance is immediately apparent. It forms the North Flank of the urban core, touching on Downtown and reaching substantially into the residential district. It is a significant part of the gateway to the City, a gateway for visitors and new residents, highly visible, and carrying strong psychological overtones. It is the first, and all too often, lasting impression that people passing through or coming to stay in St. Louis receive.

In its physical condition, which reflects the social and economic conditions, Murphy's importance grows. Studies made before World War II found the Area becoming one of the most troubled portions of the City, full of advanced symptoms of virtual abandonment by the rest of the community.

It became the target area for the City's first slum clearance efforts, under the Federal Housing Act of 1937, resulting in the Carr Square, Cochran, Pruitt, Igoe, and Vaughn low-rent public housing developments.

The post-war period brought intensification of the troubles in a complex interchange of forces -- accelerating obsolescence of structures; inadequacy of community facilities and public services; a shifting away from resident ownership; immigration

of low-income rurally oriented (and white) families; an expanding mixture of incompatible land uses as residences were displaced willy-nilly by junkyards, trucking terminals, and other harshly non-residential uses.

To all intents and purposes, Murphy, as it existed 15 years ago, was written off. Total redevelopment was seen then as the only approach. This is reflected in the report, "Let's Look at Housing" published in 1953 by the City Plan Commission, the Building Division and the Health Division, following a comprehensive survey of the City, based on American Public Health Association standards of neighborhood quality.

The years that followed brought further deterioration, but also brought new approaches to renewal. Gradual enlargement of assistance resources through the Federal Housing Acts of 1954, 1957, and 1959, permitted a re-evaluation of Murphy and opened the possibility of saving substantial portions.

Because of shortage of Federal funds, it was not until 1961 that the Murphy Area re-evaluation was undertaken in what is called a General Neighborhood Renewal Plan, financed by a Federal grant.

Following are some of the highlights of this general study:

The Area is greatly in need of additional recreational, educational, and cultural facilities.

It is unattractive in terms of both business and residential environmental features. The numerous vacant and outmoded buildings in the Area have a depressing effect. Existing businesses in many cases are marginal operations and in need of assistance if they are to continue in service.

Overcrowding of dwelling units appears in many sections of the Area, coupled with a high incidence of lot coverage.

Numerous incompatible conversions exist, with lack of proper maintenance.

There is an excessive amount of land in public right-of-way, along with undesirable street and traffic flow patterns that have a detrimental effect on residents and businesses.

Serious bad pockets of blight occur throughout.

Only about one in six dwelling units is owner-occupied. The vacancy rate is on the order of 12%-plus, with a high factor of mobility, or transiency.

Three program areas within Murphy have been delineated, as indicated on Map Exhibit A.

The boundaries of these three proposed projects, along with a chart of salient characteristics of each, are shown on Exhibit B, attached.

In effect, the Montgomery and Murphy-Blair sectors are no longer total redevelopment areas. The program emphasis can now be on rehabilitation. De Soto-Carr's condition is such that it remains predominantly a redevelopment area.

These determinations resulted, as noted previously, from the General Neighborhood Renewal Plan studies. Specific survey and planning action for each of the sectors was to have followed.

In 1962, follow-up efforts were stopped when the needed local cash contribution to total project cost was not certified. A bond issue proposition for local urban renewal matching fund purposes failed to carry by the necessary two-thirds majority. City-wide, 65 percent of voters approved the proposition. (Within the Murphy Area, over 75 percent of the voters voted approval.)

Since then, the Murphy Citizens Coordinating Committee, consisting of residents, businessmen, clergymen, agency representatives, etc., has maintained active interest in re-constituting the renewal program. This Committee, by the way, was an outgrowth of the St. Louis Park Improvement Association, an organization of Area residents, which was largely responsible for the initiation of the reevaluation of the total Murphy situation in the late 1950s. It is important to note that there is this evidence of active resident interest in renewal, and that cooperation between these Area leaders and the Land Clearance Authority has been in effect through all the serious considerations of renewal up to this point. This, moreover, will continue to be in effect.

Since 1962, additional Federal assistance resources have been provided by the Housing Acts of 1964 and 1965.

The array of resources is covered in the Summary of the Urban Renewal Program, attached as Exhibit C. The application of these resources is summarized in the booklet, West End Urban Renewal, attached as Exhibit D., to provide some idea of how renewal would be approached in the Montgomery and Murphy-Blair sectors of the Murphy Area.

Additional Federal assistance has become available, since 1962, where meeting the local share of program costs is concerned.

You will note on Exhibit B that the total estimated cost for the public aspects of the program -- this has nothing to do with the private funds necessary for rehabilitation and redevelopment -- amounts to approximately \$69,500,000. All but some \$19,900,000 would be met by Federal grants-in-aid, provided that the City can certify that it will supply its matching funds. Of the estimated \$19,900,000 local matching funds, only \$10,000,000 in cash would be required, given the benefits of some relatively new Federal measures.

A special clause in Federal Law, affecting St. Louis only, was enacted in 1965, which permits the City to obtain local share credits for the public money expended in connection with the Downtown Stadium development.

Under another special clause in Federal Urban Renewal Law (see page 14 of Exhibit C), certain expenditures of educational institutions can be credited to the locality's share of program costs.

St. Louis University's expenditures for land acquisition outside of, but adjacent to the Mill Creek Valley renewal area, would be added to the Stadium credits, and along with credits stemming from certain recent public expenditures in the Murphy Area, would go to meet all but \$10,000,000 of the City's share of total Murphy program costs.

The Land Clearance Authority staff is available to provide additional information regarding any of the points raised in this initial presentation.

MURPHY GMRP: Delmar (S) - Palm (N) - Jefferson (W) - Mark Twain (E)

	<u>DeSoto-Carr</u>		<u>Montgomery</u>		<u>Murphy-Blair</u>	
	Delmar (S) - Cass (N) Jefferson (W) - Mark Twain (E)		Cass (S) - Palm (N) Jefferson (W) - 20th St. (E)		Cass (S) - Palm (N) 20th St. (W) - Mark Twain (E)	<u>Total</u>
Size:	370		313		370	1,053 (excl. public housing areas)
Population:	8,000		11,500		14,500	34,000
No. of DU's:	2,790		4,350		4,636	11,776
Total Structures	1,401		1,650		2,046	5,097
Condition of Structures:	1,332 (95%) with deficiencies		1,490 (90%) with deficiencies		1,905 (95%) with deficiencies	4,727 (93%) with deficiencies
Structures for Clearance:	1,250		300		400	1,950 (38%)
Est. Gross Project Cost:	\$35,729,700		\$11,802,700		\$22,001,550	\$69,533,950
City Share:	9,943,300		3,533,600		6,480,800	19,957,700
Non-Cash:	<u>620,000</u>		<u>370,000</u>		<u>460,000</u>	<u>1,450,000</u>
Net City Cash:	\$ 9,323,300		\$ 3,163,600		\$ 6,020,800	\$18,507,700

Estimated Timing: All project applications have been submitted to URA. It is expected that the planning process for the entire area will take approximately 24 months.